

Message Text

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SUBJECT:INTSUM 358 - JULY 14, 1977

MOSCOW, KUWAIT, SANA FOR AMBASSADORS

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING

1. EGYPT. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, EGYPTIAN
LEADERS HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY ARE MORE IMMEDIATELY
THREATENED BY EVENTS IN AFRICA THAN BY THE ISRAELI
OCCUPATION OF SINAI. EGYPT'S GREATEST WORRY NO. WITH
REGARD TO THE MIDDLE EAST IS THAT THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT
WITH ITS CADRE OF HARDLINE FORMER GENERALS--SHARON,
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DAYAN, AND WEIZMANN-MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CAIRO'S
PREOCCUPATION WITH AFRICA TO UNDERTAKE A PREEMPTIVE
STRIKE AGAINST THE ARABS.

2. DESPITE THIS CONCERN, HOWEVER, SADAT'S ATTENTION
IS FOCUSED LARGELY ON AFRICA, AND HE MAY ASSUME A LOWER
PROFILE IN MIDDLE EASTERN QUESTIONS. HE OBVIOUSLY

CANNOT OPT OUT OF THE PEACE PROCESS COMPLETELY BUT, HAVING

SERVED AS THE ARAB "POINT MAN" SINCE LAST WINTER, HE MAY
SIMPLY LEND HIS SUPPORT TO THE INITIATIVES OF OTHERS.

3. SADAT'S FOCUS ON AFRICA HAS GREAT BENEFIT IN THE
EGYPTIAN VIEW, SINCE CAIRO'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE IS HEAVILY
DEPENDENT ON COOPERATION WITH THE US AND SAUDI ARABIA.
MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS CAN ONLY CREATE STRAINS IN
THESE KEY RELATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, SADAT'S ATTACK
ON RADICALISM IN AFRICA AND HIS ATTEMPT TO BLOCK THE
SPREAD OF SOVIET IMPERIALISM THERE IS LIKELY, IN HIS
VIEW, TO INCREASE US AND SAUDI SUPPORT FOR HIM.

4. EGYPT, MOREOVER, HAS ALWAYS VIEWED ITSELF AS AN
AFRICAN AS WELL AS A MIDDLE EASTERN STATE. EGYPT'S
CONCERN HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY FOCUSED ON THE ISLAMIC
AREAS OF AFRICA. ANOTHER HISTORICAL FOREIGN POLICY
CONCERN FOR EGYPT HAS BEEN THE CONTINUED FLOW OF THE
NILE. IN CONCRETE TERMS, THIS HAS MEANT ASSURANCE
THAT THE SUDAN NOT BE DOMINATED BY A HOSTILE POWER.

5. IN ADDITION TO THESE TRADITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS,
SADAT HAS STATED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS HIS BELIEF
THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT GOING TO BE SATISFIED UNTIL
THEY "HAVE HIS HEAD" FOR THE ABROGATION OF THE
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SOVIET-EGYPTIAN TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP. THEREFORE, HE
VIEWS WITH ALARM CURRENT ENDEAVORS BY WHAT HE VIEWS AS
SURROGATES--LIBYA AND ETHIOPIA--TO UNDERMINE FRIENDLY
STATES SUCH AS CHAD AND PARTICULARLY THE SUDAN.

6. SADAT'S ATTENTION TO SOVIET MACHINATIONS IN AFRICA,
THEREFORE MAY NOT BE SIMPLY A PASSING PHASE. HIS
PECULIAR EGYPTIAN PERSPECTIVE, HIS DESIRE TO PLAY A
LEADING ROLE AMONG AFRICAN MODERATES, AND HIS PHOBIA
AGAINST COMMUNISM AND THE SOVIET UNION MAY LED HIM TO
EXAGGERATE THE IMM-DIATE SOVIET THREAT. NEVERTHELESS,
AS LONG AS QADHAFI AND THE USSR ARE ACTIVE IN THE HORN,
EGYPTIAN CONCERN IS UNLIKELY TO ABATE.

7. WE BELIEVE SADAT'S BASIC STRATEGY WILL BE TO
CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE THE US TO PLAY A MORE
ACTIVE "ROLEIN-OPPOSING SNVIEISEMCTOALHPEOT IN AFRICA
AND TO COOPERATE CLOSELY ON THIS MUTUAL PROBLEM.

8. IT IS UNLIKELY, THOUGH NOT IMPOSSIBLE, THAT EGYPTIAN
TROOPS WILL BE SENT TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN LARGE NUMBERS.
THE SUDAN AND LIBYA ARE TWO POSSIBLE EXCEPTIONS FOR

DIFFERENT REASONS. IN THE CASE OF LIBYA, SADAT HAS WARNED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT HE MIGHT BE FORCED TO RESPOND MILITARILY IF THE LIBYANS PERSIST IN THEIR RECKLESS POLICY WHICH DIRECTLY THREATENS EGYPT. IN THE CASE OF SUDAN, SADAT HAS PUBLICIZED WIDELY HIS INTENT TO HONOR HIS MUTUAL SECURITY COMMITMENT SHOULD THE SUDAN BE THREATENED BY LIBYA OR ETHIOPIA. (SECRET)

9. ISRAEL. THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN HISTADRUT LEADER MESHEL AND FINANCE MINISTER EHRLICH, HELD LATE LAST WEEK, INDICATES THAT IT IS THEIR INTENTION TO PREVENT AN EARLY HISTADRUT-GOVERNMENT CONFRONTATION OVER ECONOMIC MATTERS. MESHEL AND EHRLICH REPORTEDLY AGREED TO HOLD REGULAR SESSIONS TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC POLICIES, AND
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EHRLICH UNDERTOOK TO CONSULT WITH THE HISTADRUT PRIOR TO THE PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY ECONOMIC STEPS BY THE GOVERNMENT. NEVERTHELESS, EMBASSY TEL AVIV NOTED, SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS PREDICT THAT A HISTADRUT-GOVERNMENT RIFT IS INEVITABLE IF THE LATTER PROCEEDS WITH THE "BELT-TIGHTENING" MEASURES MENTIONED IN THE LIKUD PLATFORM. (CONFIDENTIAL)

10. LIBYA. LIBYA WILL PROBABLY SOON RECEIVE ITS FIRST DELIVERY OF SU-7/FITTER AIRCRAFT FROM THE USSR. IT WOULD BE THE SIXTH NONCOMMUNIST COUNTRY--IN ADDITION TO ALGERIA, EGYPT, IRAQ, SYRIA, AND PERU--TO RECEIVE THIS ADVANCED FIGHTER-BOMBER. INTRODUCTION OF THE FITTERS TO THE LIBYAN INVENTORY, THE FOURTH TYPE OF TACTICAL AIRCRAFT THEY POSSESS, WILL FURTHER COMPOUND TRIPOLI'S LOGISTICAL AND MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS. IN ADDITION, THE LIBYANS ARE ALREADY EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS FINDING QUALIFIED PILOTS FOR THE NUMEROUS AIRCRAFT IN THEIR INVENTORY. THESE DEFICIENCIES WILL BE FURTHER INCREASED WITH THE PLANNED INTRODUCTION OF THE FRENCH MIRAGE F-1, WHICH MAY OCCUR LATER THIS YEAR. (SECRET) VANCE

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